

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 DUBAN 00263 280731Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /011 W
-----083172 280736Z /13

P 280705Z APR 78
FM AMCONSUL DUBAN
TO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN PRIORITY
INFO USICA WASHDC PRIORITY
SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2903
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG PRIORITY

UNCLAS DUBAN 0263

USICA

EO 11652: NA
SUBJ: PRESS REPORT ON ROOTS CANCELLATION

REF: DUBAN 0256

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF NATAL "WITNESS" STORY REPORTING
"ROOTS" CANCELLATION:

BEGIN TEXT:

THE LAST EPISODES OF ROOTS, THE AMERICAN TELEVISION SERIES,
WHICH SHOULD HAVE BEEN SHOWN AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NATAL,
PIETERMARITZBURG, LAST NIGHT WERE CANCELLED AFTER A VISIT
FROM THE VICE SQUAD.

PROFESSOR N.D. CLARENCE, PRINCIPAL AND VICE-CHANCELLOR OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF NATAL, SAID LAST NIGHT HE HAD BEEN INFORMED
THE UNIVERSITY MAY BE LIABLE FOR PROSECUTION AS THE SERIES HAS
NOT BEEN REVIEWED BY THE PUBLICATIONS CONTROL BOARD.

"UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES WE HAVE NO OTHER OPTION BUT TO
WITHDRAW THE SERIES" HE SAID. "IF WE CAN DO ANYTHING ABOUT
IT, WE WILL DEFINITELY TRY TO SHOW THE LAST EPISODES AT A
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 DUBAN 00263 280731Z

LATER DATE."

ROOTS WAS SHOWN BY THE UNIVERSITY IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE
AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTRE IN DUBAN. FILM SHOWS WERE BEING
HELD AT BOTH THE PIETERMARITZBURG AND THE DUBAN CAMPUS,
WHERE THE FIRST EPISODES WERE SHOWN ON WEDNESDAY NIGHT.

THE MOVE WAS MADE BY THE VICE SQUAD FOLLOWING A COMPLAINT BY A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC OVER ROOTS, WHICH IS A PORTRAYAL OF BLACK SLAVERY IN AMERICA, BASED ON THE NOVEL BY ALEX HALEY.

THE SERIES WAS SCREENED BY THE ABC NETWORK IN THE UNITED STATES LAST YEAR, WHERE IT RANKED AMONG THE ALL-TIME TOP TEN IN TV RATINGS. IT WAS ESTIMATED THAT BY THE LAST EPISODE 130 MILLION AMERICANS HAD WATCHED THE SERIES "WHICH WAS HAILED AS AN "IMPORTANT CIVIL RIGHTS EVENT" BY BLACK LEADERS.

TIME MAGAZINE RAN A COVER STORY ON ROOTS AND SAID THAT THE SERIES WAS A "SOCIAL PHENOMENON, A POTENTIALLY IMPORTANT BENCHMARK IN U.S. RELATIONS."

MR. ASHLEY WILLS, DIRECTOR OF THE AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTRE IN DURBAN, SAID IT WAS NOT THE PRACTICE OF THE SERVICE TO SUBMIT FILMS TO THE CONTROL BOARD.

THE SERIES WILL BE FLOWN TO CAPE TOWN TO BE SHOWN AT THE AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTRE AT THE U.S. EMBASSY, WHERE IT WOULD BE SUBJECT TO DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY. END TEXT
HUGHES

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FILMS, PRESS COMMENTS, CULTURAL PRESENTATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978DURBAN00263
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780181-1050
Format: TEL
From: DURBAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978046/aaaaaepu.tel
Line Count: 84
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 3c6da1b0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 DURBAN 256
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2977513
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESS REPORT ON ROOTS CANCELLATION
TAGS: SCUL, SOPN, SF
To: CAPE TOWN
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/3c6da1b0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014